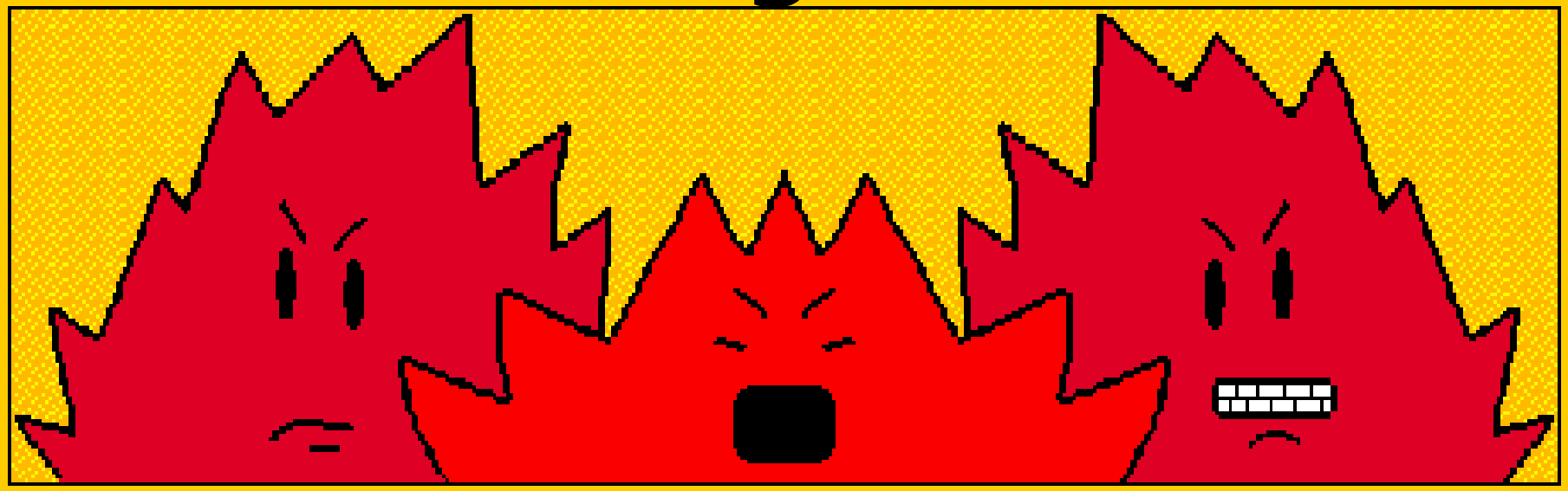
Conflict, Criticism and Anger



AMEDDC&S Department of Dental Science,
Professional Development Branch

25 FEB 04

Terminal Learning Objective

Given information on how to manage disputes or clashes between personnel you supervise discuss principles, application, and available options of conflict, criticism, and anger management IAW Conflict Management Group, Win/win (Brochure).

Enabling Learning Objectives

A. Given information on conflict management define basic principles IAW Conflict Management Group, Win/win

B. Given information on conflict management discuss conflict, its value, existence, why people fear it, responding to it and touch versus tender behavior IAW

C. Given information on conflict management discuss criticism, three typical reasons, the real meaning, the danger of seeking too much approval, controlled circumstances, giving criticism without arguing, a model for initiating confrontation and determining the best approach, ground rules, critical

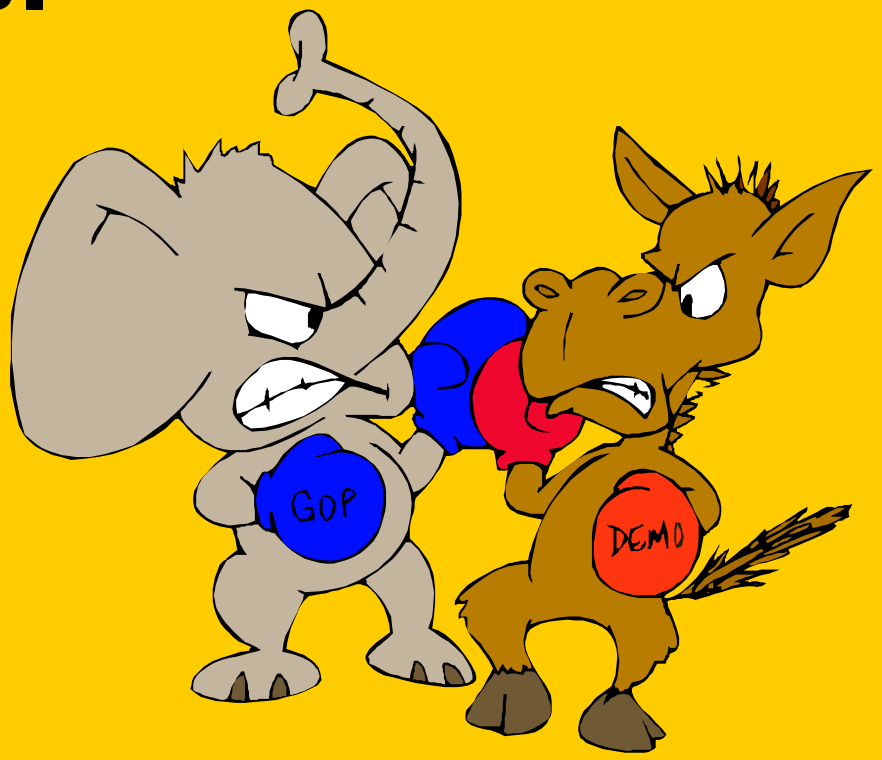
D. Given information on conflict management discuss anger, it's positive effects, negative aspects, model for expressing anger appropriately, dealing with your own anger, responding to anger of others, model for dealing with anger in self/others, consequences of anger and options for dealing with problems IAW

Life is Difficult – That’s the Norm!

a. We are responsible for our own life situation and the choices we make about responding to it.

b. We must manage our expectations of other people, situations, and ourselves.

c. There is no way to work with people on conflict free basis.



d. Good criticism (descriptive) provides information that can be put to good use to solve a problem and not attack a person directly. If you know the difference between descriptive and judgmental criticism, you can reduce conflict by 60%-80%.

e. Anger is the first emotion to be experienced and the last to be controlled.

f. It takes the average person 18 months to two years to feel comfortable dealing with a new self-imposed behavior pattern. Copious amounts of discipline are required to make the change a permanent part of your behavior pattern.

Conflict

Conflict can have value if it excites to action, increases group cohesiveness, diffuses what might lead to more serious conflicts, serves as a measure of how important issues, ideas and people are to you. We tend to get angry about only those

b. A conflict exists when we do not get something we want or we get something we do not want. A conflict exists when needs are unmet.

(1) The persons whose needs are unmet OWN the problem.

(2) The owner of the problem must initiate its resolution.

People fear conflict because:

(1) Fear of the unknown

(2) Fear of our own feelings or the feelings of others

(3) Fear of lack of personal control or personal skills

(4) Fear that things will get worse

(5) Fear of not being liked

(6) Scientific management

Responding to conflict involves making a series of choices with solving the problem as the goal. Therefore, it becomes necessary to use a combination of assertive and non-aggressive tools to be successful.

Every conflict will
l for an individual
assessment of
he situation to
letermine the
ppropriate
combination. Keep in
mind that true
assertiveness
llows you to meet
your own needs while
especting rights of

Tough vs. Tender Behavior

Tough is not mean, tender is not weak. You have to be able to utilize both styles as situations dictate.

Tough means – goal oriented, forceful, by the book, logical, bottom line, consistent, focused, conservative and determined.

Tough behavior is appropriate when:

a) Output is critical

b) There can be no debate

c) A non-negotiable deadline exists

d) Resources are limited

e) Ethical, moral, legal values at stake

(g) When someone has to take charge

(h) A decision has been made and must be carried out

Tender means –

receptive, open minded, thoughtful, understanding, in touch, tolerant, unselfish, spontaneous.

Tender behavior is appropriate when:

a) Ample time and resources are available

b) Other people's commitment is at stake

c) Excellence is the only acceptable outcome

d) There is not enough information to make a quality

e) There are several acceptable ways to get things done

f) People have hurt feelings over significant issues

g) The situation is complex and understanding will require substantial effort

Criticism

Three typical reasons for criticism:

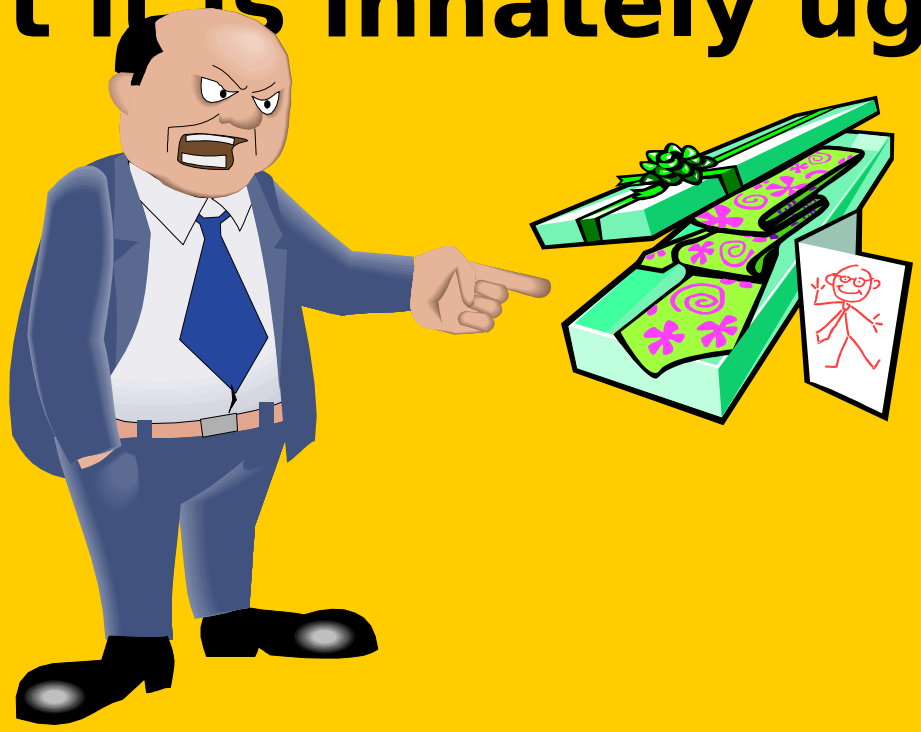
(1) Different values

(2) Envy

(3) Misunderstanding

The real meaning of criticism – when people criticize, they are really giving information about themselves, not necessarily you.

EXAMPLE: “That’s an ugly tie,” tells us you don’t like the tie, not that it is innately ugly.



The danger of seeking too much approval – the more you need approval of other people, the more you can be manipulated by them.

Seek criticism under controlled circumstances – take the offense; ask a person whose judgment you value and trust for their impression of what you are doing…the more you hear negative input, the less personally you

How to give criticism without arguing – don't say, "I disagree with you." A person is a result of his/her own thoughts and ideas, and such a statement will be taken personally in a negative way.

Other trigger words are: but and however. Accept their reality, you don't have to believe or understand, but it is their world as they see it. If you can accept this, they are more likely to expand their world to include more of your way of thinking.

(1) Make it easy for people to change – don't let the manner of your behavior be the problem; don't diminish them in your eyes.

(2) Eliminate the phrase "You're wrong." Avoid Win-Lose arguments – winners never learn, and losers doesn't forget.

A Model For Initiating Confrontation

(1) "Right now the situation is that…"

(2) "The problem that this causes is…"

(3) "The concern I have about this is…"

(4) "I'd like to see…I'd like to suggest…"

A Model For Determining The Best Approach

Have each soldier/employee complete and sign the following statement: "When my behavior/performance is off target (i.e., a problem for you), here is how I would like it brought to my attention…" (i.e., written, telephone, face to face, with advance notice). This can be done during counseling.

Ground Rules - Do it privately, tell me as soon as it is a problem, use language that I can put to good use; I have the option of discussing it now or later after giving it some thought.

Classic Critical Statement – “You’re Unfair” - When this statement is made, an appropriate response might be: “Perhaps I’m more unfair than I’m aware of.” Given their view of the situation, you may appear to be unfair when in fact you really are not.

Pose a counter question: “What approach would be more fair?” If they have a better idea, you can consider it. If they say, however “I don’t know.” Your reply might be: “That’s the same problem I have and right now this

Possible Solutions to Differences of Substance

(1) Continue as-is

(2) Do it their way

(3) Do it your way

(4) Find a compromise

(5) Do each separately

(6) Abandon the issue

(7) Seek third-party intervention.

SOLVING THE PROBLEM IS THE GOAL…NOT WINNING!

Anger – we create our own anger. People themselves cannot technically anger us. Things people can do, cause us to decide to react in an angry fashion.

Positive Effects of Anger

(1) Acts as energizer

(2) Relieves tension

(3) Can give access to new information

(4) Can assist in assuming or resuming control

Negative Effects of Anger

(1) Disrupts and distorts actions and thoughts

(2) Impairs judgment and memory

(3) Produces impulsive behavior

(4) Leads to unnecessary aggression

(5) Inhibits formation and development of relationships

(6)The more you vent your anger; the

Model for expressing anger appropriately

(1) Identify the problem

(2) Specify those affected by it

(3) Acknowledge the complexity of it

(4) State the need for resolution

(5) Ask for help

Dealing with your own anger - Anger is a form of energy. It must go somewhere. There are no risk free ways to deal with anger or conflict.

The key to good emotional health is to increase your range of possible responses, but remember; the more skillful you become at managing your own anger, the more uncomfortable others may become with your personal ability to deal with

Responding to anger of others - It's important to let others "own" their own anger and that you do not become "infected" by it.

The Marshall Formula seeks healing by allowing individuals to go through the anger to the answer. It states that 80% of the solution in dealing with an angry person is to first let him/her express his/her anger.

This makes it much easier to deal with the actual substance of the problem. You then try to get to the heart of the matter and not get bogged down in the consequences of the anger.

Consequences of anger

(1) Facial expressions: hostile, aggressive

(2) Altered voice tones

(3) Exaggerated language; “I called your office 20 times.”

(4) Physically act out anger: cry, throw things

(5) Ask manipulative questions: “Do you have the slightest idea what’s

(6) Personal attacks: name calling

(7) Sarcasm: favorite of intelligent and non-aggressive types

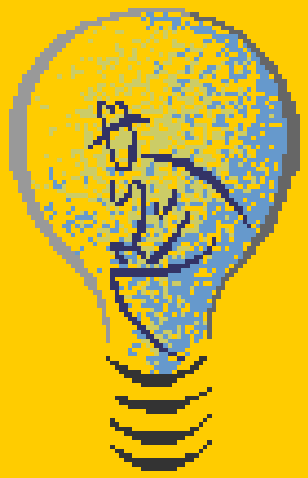
(8) Profanity: %^(*#(*@!

Be aware: Angry people will shop around to find the consequences of anger that bug you the most and keep harping on it…don't take it personally or they win.

Model for dealing with anger in others – remind yourself that their anger originated in the same manner as yours (within themselves). Don't talk until you have thought about what to say (if you have nothing to say, admit it).

Acknowledge the reality of their anger and wait for their response. Make an empathy statement and wait for their response. Don’t be afraid to agree with the content issue. Ask for permission to ask questions/offer suggestions. End on an action step if at all possible (I’ll get back to you; we’ll try plan A. etc.)

Questions



Review of Main Points

a. **Basic Principles** as described in Presentations by Seminars, International, Inc.

b. **Conflict**; its value, existence, why people fear it, responding to it, and touch vs. tender behavior.

c. Criticism; three typical reasons, the real meaning, danger of seeking too much approval, controlled circumstances, and giving criticism without arguing.

d. Anger; its positive effects, negative aspects, model for expressing anger appropriately, dealing with your own anger, responding to anger of others, model for dealing with anger in self/others, consequences of anger, and options for dealing with problems.